



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
SCOTT M. STRINGER

May 10, 2019

Chancellor Richard A. Carranza
New York City Department of Education
Tweed Courthouse
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Carranza,

As you know, the Office of the Comptroller has been working diligently with the Department of Education (DOE) and other City agencies for many months to ensure that the transition of contracted child care services from the Administration for Children's Services to DOE is successful. There is perhaps no greater obligation we have in City government than to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of our children, and ensuring continuity of quality services is paramount to upholding this important commitment.

As part of this transition, I know DOE has taken steps to convene and solicit feedback from early childhood education stakeholders. Indeed, the development of a new birth-to-five contracted system provides a unique opportunity not only to articulate a vision of a system the City believes will support children, families, and providers but also to identify and address existing flaws. However, the enclosed April 25, 2019 letter to Mayor de Blasio from leaders of human services organizations—many of whom oversee EarlyLearn NYC and Pre-K for All programs and made the expansion of services under the latter possible—raises serious questions about the feasibility of the recently released Birth-to-Five and Head Start/Early Head Start Request for Proposals (RFPs), which they call “unworkable and unacceptable.” Their five key concerns, as enumerated in the letter, are that the RFPs: (1) perpetuate salary disparities, (2) penalize providers with Pay for Enrollment, (3) fail to efficiently structure programs, (4) provide no funding for indirect costs, and (5) lack cost escalators.

Providers are the backbone of our early childhood education and care system, but the system can be neither high-quality nor sustainable if built on their backs. I strongly urge you to work with the provider community to address these issues and amend the existing RFPs. New York City’s early childhood workforce enables thousands of children to thrive in school and supports families’ capacity to achieve greater economic stability, but they bear significant costs to be able to do this work, often at the expense of their own economic security. They deserve for the City to take the necessary time to get this right.



Thank you for your continued partnership and attention to this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott M. Stringer".

Scott M. Stringer
New York City Comptroller